

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARAMA 00839 090357Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-07 DLOS-09 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
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R 081730Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4402
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
ZEI/AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE (BY POUCH)
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USCINCSO QUARRY HGTS CZ

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E. O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, EFIS, NS, GY

SUBJECT: GUYANA REPLIES TO SURINAM

REF: PARAMARIBO 588

1. IN NOTE DELIVERED TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR HEINEMANN
BY GUYANESE AMBASSADOR SAUL ON JUNE 7, GUYANA HAS REPLIED
TO SURINAM'S NOTE OF APRIL 22 SENT IN ANSWER TO GUYANA'S
APRIL 12 PROTEST NOTE. ACCORDING TO GUYANESE EMBOFF, NOTE
IS NON-CONFRONTATIONAL AND IF "READ THE RIGHT WAY BY THE
SURINAM GOVERNMENT(GOS)" COULD PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR
RETURNING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO A SEMBLANCE
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PAGE 02 PARAMA 00839 090357Z

OF NORMALITY. NOTE REPORTEDLY INDICATES A WILLINGNESS ON
THE PART OF THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT TO DISCUSS OUTSTANDING
FISHING PROBLEMS SEPARATE FROM OVERALL BORDER AND OTHER
ISSUES, PROBABLY ALONG THE LINES OF THE AGREEMENT OUTLINED
IN THE FEBRUARY TALKS IN PARAMARIBO BETEEN FORMER
GUYANESE FOREIGN MINISTER WILLS AND PRIME MINISTER ARRON.

2. NOTE IS SAID TO BE CONSISTENT WITH GUYANESE GOVERNMENT'S (GOG) VIEW THAT THE WILLS-ARRON MEETINGS DID NOT RESULT IN A FINAL AGREEMENT AND THAT QUESTION OF FISHING LICENSES FORMERLY HELD BY GUYANESE FISHERMEN IN THE CORANTIJN RIVER SHOULD NOT BE TIED DIRECTLY TO MATTER OF SURINAM'S SUGAN-26 FISHING TRAWLER SEIZED BY THE GUYANESE LAST SEPTEMBER. HOWEVER, SAID GUYANESE EMBASSY SOURCE, NO FURTHER TALKS WOULD BE NECESSARY TO EFFECT A SETTLEMENT BASED ON RETURN OF THE LICENSES AND THE BOAT BEYOND AN INFORMAL UNDERSTANDING WHICH COULD BE REACHED BETWEEN GUYANA'S EMBASSY HERE AND THE GOS. NO WRITTEN AGREEMENT WOULD ACTUALLY RESULT IN THIS SCENARIO.

3. BROADER QUESTIONS INVOLVING THE DISPUTED "NEW RIVER TRIANGLE" AREA IN SOUTHWEST SURINAM AND THE ACTUAL BOUNDARY ALONG THE CORANTIJN RIVER CAN. ACCORDING TO THE GUYANESE EMOFF, BE LEFT FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION, EITHER IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COMMISSIONS PROVIDED FOR IN THE SO-CALLED CHAGUARAMAS AGREEMENT OF 1971 OR IN SOME OTHER FORUM. THE ACTUAL SCHEDULING OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS AND THEIR PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS WOULD DEPEND UPON THE PROGRESS OF THE PROSPECTIVE SETTLEMENT OF THE FISHING QUESTIONS.

4. GUYANESE EMBASSY SOURCE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT NOTE COULD ALSO BE READ NEGATIVELY BY THE SURINAMERS AND THAT IN DELIVERING THE NOTE, THE GUYANESE HAD URGED THEM TO STUDY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PARAMA 00839 090357Z

IT CAREFULLY. NOTE APPARENTLY REAFFIRMS GUYANESE POSITIONS EXPRESSED IN ORIGINAL PROTEST AND INCLUDES REPORT OF A NEW INCIDENT INVOLVING AN ALLEGED LANDING OF ARMED SURINAMERS ON THE GUYANESE SIDE OF THE CORANTIJN RIVER TO INSPECT LOCAL FISHING BOATS TO SEE IF THEY HAD BEEN IN THE WATER RECENTLY. HOWEVER, CONTINUED SOURCE, THE LANGUAGE USED IS MUCH Milder THAN THAT OF THE FIRST NOTE PRESENTED IN EARLY APRIL.

5. SOURCE ALSO REPORTED A NEW INCIDENT INVOLVING HARASSMENT OF A GUYANESE SAWMILL BY SOME UNIDENTIFIED SURINAMERS WHICH WAS REPORTED TO GUYANESE EMBASSY HERE FROM GEORGETOWN ONLY AFTER SAUL DELIVERED NEW NOTE TO THE GOS. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHAT EFFECT THIS NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL HAVE ON THE APPARENT WILLINGNESS OF THE GUYANESE GOVERNMENT (GOG) TO MOVE TOWARD A PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF THE FISHING DISPUTES.

6. SOURCE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT GUYANESE LAWYER LLOYD LUCKHOO IS ENGAGED IN A PRIVATE EFFORT TO MOVE THE QUESTION OF THE FISHING DISAGREEMENTS TOWARD A SETTLEMENT. LUCKHOO'S ENDEAVOR IS APPARENTLY COMPLETELY OUTSIDE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CHANNELS, A FACT WHICH REPORTEDLY CAUSES SOME

DIFFICULTY FOR AMBASSADOR SAUL WHO REGARDS HIMSELF AS THE
GOG'S ONLY OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN IN PARAMARIBO.

7. COMMENT: POSSIBILITIES FOR SETTLEMENT AND GOG PREFER-
ENCE FOR ACCOMMODATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION DESCRIBED
BY GUYANESE EMBOFF STAND IN STARK CONTRAST TO SAME
SOURCE'S RATHER PESSIMISTIC PROGNOSIS AT THE TIME OF
GUYANA'S ORIGINAL PROTEST NOTE. SOURCE CREDITS ADDITIONAL
INFORMAATION HAVING BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO GOG DECISION
MAKERS AND A CHANCE TO STUDY THE SITUATION AS BEING RESPONSIBLE
FOR A CHANGE OF MIND IN GEORGETOWN. WITH THE GOS HAVING
PUBLICLY COMMITTED ITSELF TO TAKING STEPS TO BRING THE
ISSUES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES TO THE DISCUSSION TABLE,
PERHAPS THE ENVIRONMENT NOW EXISTS TO REMOVE AT LEAST SOME
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PAGE 04 PARAMA 00839 090357Z

OF THE IRRITANTS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. AS
HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CASE, HOWEVER, THE NEXT STEP DEPENDS UPON
THE POLITICAL WILL AND GOOD FAITH OF EACH SIDE IN PROCEEDING
ALONG A CONCILIATORY COURSE AND THOSE QUALITIES HAVE YET TO BE
DEMONSTRATED.
LORTON

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